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Introduction

Territorial Party Politics in Western Europe: a framework for analysis

Wilfried Swenden and Bart Maddens

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[A] Mind the Gap: Bridging Regionalization and Party (System) Literatures

In recent decades, social scientists have argued that in Western Europe, government and governance should be increasingly understood from a multi-layered perspective. The EU has developed into an important supranational regulator, leading one American observer to label it as a ‘regulatory’ federation (Kelemen, 2004). Simultaneously authority has migrated to sub-state levels of government, strengthening regions in Western Europe in terms of their constitutional, legislative, administrative or fiscal capacity (Keating, 1998 and 2001; Greer, 2006; Swenden, 2006, Hooghe, Marks and Schakel, 2008). Although this process has developed far from evenly across all member-states of the EU, it has affected most of its largest and/or multi-national members (Belgium, France, Italy, United Kingdom, Spain). The strengthening of the regional tier is self-evident by studying recent constitutional developments in countries like Belgium (Deschouwer, 2005; Swenden and Jans, 2006), Spain (Aja, 2004; Moreno 2001, Colino, forthcoming), the UK (Hazell, 2000; Trench, 2004) or Italy (Gold, 2003; Palermo 2005). Yet, even Germany – sometimes portrayed as a ‘unitary state in all but name’ (Abromeit, 1992) seems to be decentralizing, a development linked to growing socio-economic divisions between its regions which dramatically intensified after unification (Sturm, 2001; Benz, 2006, Detterbeck and Jeffery in this volume). Several reasons have been put forward to account for this development: economists highlight that regions or small states are better placed to compete in a context where trade liberalization has made traditional state boundaries more porous and intensified competition for foreign investment or best innovation practices (Ohmae, 1995, Porter, 1998, Alesina and Spolaore, 2003). Policy analysts point at new modes of decision-making in which authority diffuses from hierarchical structures into non hierarchical policy networks (Hooghe and Marks, 2001; Bomberg and Peterson, 1999; Peters and Pierre, 2005). Political sociologists point at the reawakening of territorial and linguistic cleavages in a more secular Western Europe from which communism has largely disappeared.

The importance of regional or sub-state territory in Western Europe stands in apparent contradiction with the scholarly literature on party systems, party organizations and electoral campaigning. Much of the recent *party system literature* has focused on the extent to which such systems have become more or less *nationalized* (Caramani, 2004; Chhibber and Kollman, 2004; Jones and Mainwaring, 2003; Thorlakson, 2007). For instance, using an exhaustive database of electoral results at the constituency level from nearly all West European states, Caramani found that Lipset and Rokkan’s ‘frozen party system’ thesis still holds today (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). Despite several decades of

regionalization and growing electoral volatility, party families built upon the cleavages generated by the National and Industrial Revolutions continue to dominate the contemporary West European party landscapes. Parties became ‘*catch-all-over-parties*’ (that is, sought to gain votes across the electoral constituencies of the state) before developing into mass or catch-all parties (Caramani, 2004).

Similarly, until recently, the *party organizational literature* largely ignored how parties organize at the regional level (even though analyses of the elite party, mass party, catch-all party or cartel party may describe how parties organize locally, Katz and Mair, 1993 and 1995; Krouwel, 2006). Processes of candidate selection have been studied primarily with statewide, less so with regional electoral contests in mind (Gallagher, and Marsh 1988; Rahat and Hazan, 2001; Bille, 2001). Classifications like the party in public office’ are concerned primarily with the party in central government or with MPs in the statewide legislatures in mind. How parties organize regionally is better known for those parties which self-evidently organize at *that* level in the first place: the ethno-regionalist or autonomist parties of Western Europe (De Winter and Türsan, 1998, De Winter, Gomez-Reino and Lynch, 2006; Hepburn, forthcoming).

Finally, regions have been largely left out of the principal theories of *electoral competition* or campaigning. Most of these theories (like the proximity theory, directional theory or issue ownership theory) make predictions with respect to campaign strategies at one level of policy-making, usually the statewide or federal policy level. Hence, they disregard the extent to which campaigns may be conditioned by campaign realities in different electoral arenas. Furthermore, although theories of electoral competition could be applied to the regional level of government, they are rarely tested at this level. For instance, expert surveys measuring policy positions of voters or party elites primarily do so with statewide elections or statewide politics in mind. Similarly, the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) maps the policy positions and issue salience of party programs based on their *general* or statewide election manifestos (Budge *et al.*, 2001). Recent efforts to broaden the scope of CMP data have focused on the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, much less so on how the CMP could be meaningfully applied to regional or local elections (Klingemann *et al.*, 2006, but Pogorelis *et al.*, 2005).

One of the principal aims of this book is to narrow the gap between the regionalization and the party literatures on Western Europe. The latter has retained - notwithstanding several contributions in recent years, particularly in the field of party organizational studies – a strong ‘national’ focus (Jeffery and Hough, 2003; Hough and Jeffery, 2006a). We argue that as a result of the process of regionalization described above, regional elections have gained in significance, regional political elites have become increasingly professionalized and parties are under increasing pressure to adapt their internal organization and campaign strategies to such new realities. In sum, regionalization has influenced the nature of the *party system* and the way in which parties *organize* and *campaign* in statewide and especially regional elections.

In this volume we cannot possibly bring together a comprehensive analysis of the territorial aspects of all party systems or parties in all West European countries. Therefore, the focus of this book is limited in two respects: first in the type of parties that are analyzed and second, in the countries that are selected for in depth or comparative analysis. With respect to the type of parties that are analyzed, this book focuses on statewide parties alone. We define statewide parties as parties which participate in

statewide and regional elections and are represented in at least three quarters of the regions in the state. We primarily focus on statewide parties because we believe that they face the most challenging coordination issues in terms of policy-making, organization and campaigning. This is so, because they seek to maximize their following in statewide *and* regional elections, participate in government or influence policy in as many regions of the state as possible

With respect to the selection of countries, the empirical evidence that is brought together in this volume relates to the territorial dimension of party politics in Belgium, Germany, Italy, Spain and Great Britain. As such it does not cover all West European states with a federal or regionalized character (for instance, Austria, Switzerland but also France are lacking from the analysis). Although this constrains the generalisability of our findings, our sample contains some of the (leading) West European states with an (increasingly) significant regional tier of government. For this reason, the analytical framework below only uses examples taken from the countries that are covered by this volume.

Before presenting an analytical framework that ties together the various contributions to this volume, just a brief note on what we mean by ‘region’. We see regions as the key meso-level of government in the state (sometimes called Land, Autonomous Community, Community or Region, province, ‘nation’ or canton). In general, we denote elections at that level as ‘regional elections’. By comparison, we use the term state to denote the highest level of governance; elections which take place at that level are considered as statewide (and not ‘national’ or general) elections.

[A] Party Systems in a Multi-Layered Context, from a ‘national’ to a ‘multi-level’ party system

[B] The national bias in nationalization studies

In recent years, much of the party system literature in Western Europe focused on the so-called ‘nationalization’ of the West European party system. Caramani’s influential study in this regard is based on an exhaustive collection and analysis of electoral data at the constituency or district level. His findings point at the overall nationalization of Western European party systems, that is, an increasing homogenization of electoral competition across the regional units of the state (Caramani, 2004: 42). However, he mentions some exceptions. For instance, he acknowledges that in more recent times a tendency towards ‘de-nationalization’ can be observed, at least in multi-national democracies such as Britain, Belgium and Italy. Using a broader variety of indicators to analyze party nationalization, Caramani finds a more denationalizing British party system since the 1990s, at least compared with the average observed for the entire post World War II period. This is consistent with Chhibber and Kollman, who, in a different study, observed a peak in the nationalization of the British party system during the 1960s and 1970s, before they recorded a substantial decline (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004: 196-7). Denationalization is also observed for Belgium and - albeit to a much lesser extent - Italy (with relative stabilization *after* the implosion of the Christian-Democrats and the rise of the *Lega* in the early 1990s).

Importantly, Caramani recorded *no* significant overall changes in the nationalization of the Spanish party system since 1978. Similarly, the German party system has not become more 'denationalized' after unification (at least until 1999). In the league of West European party systems, Germany did not climb up the ladder of denationalization: in 1999 it still ranked behind Belgium, Switzerland, Finland, Britain, Spain and Italy. The cumulative standard deviation, that is, the extent to which constituency results for all German parties deviate from the overall mean, did not increase between 1990 and 1999. Thus, the German party system did not become more territorially fragmented in relative and absolute terms (Caramani, 2004: 92-3).

Caramani's observations on Spain sound counterintuitive given this country's "federalization" in recent years (Moreno, 2001). Similarly one would expect that the rising inter-regional socio-economic heterogeneity in Germany after unification would have coincided with a less 'nationalized' party system. Why do nationalization studies seem to contradict these expectations?

First, and most importantly, although not all nationalization studies use identical indicators, all of them are based on results for *statewide* elections *alone*. Yet, regional elections in Belgium, Germany, Spain or Italy have been (or have become increasingly) relevant given that regional governments frequently control important aspects of capital intensive policies such as education, industrial development, transport, infrastructure, health or social assistance. Therefore, to disregard regional election results is to leave out an (increasingly) important component of party system nationalization. Developments in the regional party systems must be considered as an essential component of party systemic developments in a federal or multi-layered state.

Second, most nationalization studies are based on overall aggregate national patterns. By doing so, they cannot fully account for the potential importance of limited or aberrant 'nationalization' in strong regions such as Catalonia, Scotland, the Basque Country, Wales or even Bavaria that represent relatively small sections of the population, but play a key role in triggering the (further) decentralization of the state. Hence, Chhibber and Kollman make claims about the entire British party system, but Scotland and Wales represent such a small share of the overall electorate that their findings cannot fully bear out the peculiarity of the Scottish and Welsh electorates. Until the 2001 statewide elections, only 6.9 percent of all British constituencies were Scottish (and thus constituted a support base for the Scottish National Party) and only about 4.3 percent were Welsh. Similarly, many Spanish parties have a small statewide following but due to their regionally concentrated support can be significant forces within their regional party system: most non-state wide parties cover less than nine percent of the Spanish constituencies (Caramani, 2004: 113; Montero, 2005). In Germany, the Bavarian CSU has had a more profound impact than the East German PDS in pushing the German nationalization index down. Yet, it does not take an electoral specialist to realize that the East German party system is profoundly different from that which is found in the rest of the country. Related to this point, the 'nationalization' thesis cannot map -to borrow from Sartori and Bartolini - the regional 'blackmail potential' of autonomist parties (Sartori, 1976; Bartolini, 2004). Aggregated 'nationalization' indices do not express the relevance of these parties at the statewide level where they can wield significant political influence (see further). For instance, the need of Spanish central minority governments to rely on the legislative support of one or several autonomist parties during most of the 1990s and

again since 2004 has played a role in explaining more recent developments in the Spanish decentralization process (see further).

[B] The Party system as a Multi-Level Party System

To remedy this deficiency in party system nationalization studies, Gibson and Suarez-Cao recently introduced the concept of a '*federalized party system*', which they define as 'a party system in which more than one territorially delimited party system operates', that is a national [statewide] and several sub-national [regional] ones (Gibson and Suarez-Cao, 2007: 6). We suggest using the concept of a multi-level party system to denote what Gibson and Suarez-Cao perceive as a federalized party system. The multi-level party system brings together a *statewide* party system which emerges from statewide elections and a set of regional party systems reflecting the outcome for regional elections. Both authors concur with our viewpoint that nationalization studies are incomplete so long as they do not take into account developments in the regional party system and incorporate their interaction with the statewide party system.

It is not difficult to see how reconceptualizing a party system as a 'multi-level party system' can shed a different perspective on the nationalization studies reviewed above: using the framework of a multi-level party system we need to consider the properties of the regional party systems and analyze how they *interact* with each other and with the statewide party system. Similarly, we must take into account developments in the regional party systems when measuring *party system change*. Party system change is defined by Peter Mair as the transformation of a party system from one class or type of party system into another (Mair, 1997: 52). However, also in this regard change is primarily understood as change resulting from transformations of the statewide party system alone; for instance, to use Sartori's classification scheme, from a system of moderate into one of polarized pluralism (Sartori, 2005: 116-92). Yet, multi-level party system change could also occur if party competition at the regional level transforms the direction of competition or produces a change of governing formula at that level. For instance, the election of an SNP minority government in Scotland in May 2007 certainly produced party system change at the Scottish level since it forced Labour into joint opposition with the Conservatives and Liberals. This certainly generated a change in the direction of competition, notwithstanding the already distinctive character of the Scottish party system prior to such a change in the Scottish governing formula. Party competition is now structured along 'the regionalist issue': that is the extent to which Scottish autonomy should be extended or Scottish independence should be contemplated.

The integration of a multi-level party system depends on the extent to which the same parties are represented at the various levels of the system and the degree to which their support is evenly balanced across the levels and regions of the state. A multi-level party system is fully integrated if the same parties are represented at the statewide and regional levels in about equal strength. A multi-level party system is loosely integrated if the support for statewide parties varies considerably across the regions and between the state-wide and regional levels, for instance, due to the presence of regional parties. In the extreme case of a completely disintegrated system, each region has a specific party-system with parties that differ from those in the other regions and those on the statewide level.

[B] Patterns of Interaction in a Multi-Level Party System

The interaction between the component parts of a multi-level party system can take on several forms. The simplest distinction relates to patterns of *vertical interaction* between the statewide and regional party system. That interaction may take on a ‘*top-down*’ or ‘*bottom up*’ direction. In comparison, patterns of *horizontal* interaction consider the impact which regional party systems have on each other.

We start with considering the relevance of *vertical* interaction from ‘*a top-down perspective*,’ pertaining to the extent to which developments in the statewide party system affect the regional party systems. The notion that the outcome of a regional election is primarily influenced by statewide politics is dealt with in the literature on regional elections as ‘second order elections’. For long regional elections were seen to be of *second order* relative to statewide elections because they generated lower turnout levels, boosted support for new or minor parties and, especially when held halfway through the statewide election cycle, harmed central level incumbents and benefited central opposition parties (Reif and Schmitt, 1980; Hough and Jeffery, 2006a: 7-10). Recent empirical evidence demonstrates that regional elections in Western Europe still generate lower turnout levels and that, on the whole, this gap has not been narrowing (López Pintor, Gratschew, et al., 2002: 78-9; Font and Rico, 2003; Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, s.d.; UK Electoral Commission). However, evidence to support ‘second orderness’ on the other indicators is less persuasive. For instance, after German unification, central incumbents still suffer setbacks in German regional elections when held halfway through the statewide election cycle, but the key central opposition parties may not benefit as much as the second order model predicts (Lutz Kern and Hainmüller, 2006: 127-49; Hough and Jeffery, 2006b: 119-39). Furthermore, the proportion of the German electorate in regional elections that would have to change its vote to produce the same outcome as for federal elections has gone up. Similar observations have been made with respect to regional elections in Spain and the UK. In Spain, the share of voters who support autonomist parties is much higher in regional than in statewide elections (Pallarés and Keating, 2006). The same practice of ‘dual voting’ can be observed in Scotland and Wales, where SNP and Plaid Cymru score much better in regional elections, in part because larger shares of Labour and Conservative voters (in statewide elections) prefer to stay at home (Bromley, 2006: 197-9; Trystan, Scully and Wyn Jones, 2003). These examples attest that statewide and regional party systems do not necessarily respond to the logic of ‘second orderness’. Indeed, it has been argued that voters in West European states increasingly perceive regional elections as electoral contests in their own right, instead of seeing them as ‘popularity tests’ for incumbent central governments (Hough and Jeffery, 2006a).

Second orderness focuses on the short term spill over effects of developments in the statewide party system on the regional party systems. Yet, it is not difficult to see how some of these developments may generate more durable effects. For instance, if parties, as Caramani attests, develop a ‘catch-all-over-strategy’ first in statewide elections, then they are likely to seek such a strategy in regional elections as well. For instance, no one ever questioned the theoretical possibility that the British statewide would not participate in devolved elections in Scotland and Wales, whereas their absence from devolved

elections for Northern Ireland was widely expected. Indeed, each of the three statewide parties (Labour, Liberals and Conservatives) had participated in statewide or Westminster elections in Scotland and Wales, but did not file candidates in UK elections in Northern Ireland. Conversely, parties which suffer badly or face extinction in statewide elections may ultimately also disappear from the regional party system. This was the case for instance in Spain, where during the eighties the centrist CDS could initially maintain a strong position in some regions. However, the continuing poor results at the state-wide level eventually forced the party into oblivion.

Vertical interactions in the federal party system can also take on a *bottom up* direction; hence, developments in the regional party system can trigger changes in the statewide party system. For instance, notwithstanding the earlier mentioned practice of dual voting, some voters would not have supported autonomist parties in Spanish elections if they had not been successful already in regional elections also. As a result, Spanish minority governments felt compelled to negotiate with these parties, instead of signing coalition pacts with the (larger) statewide party competitor. This way, parties that appeared at the regional level acquired a powerful brokerage (or, as alluded to above, 'blackmail') potential in the centre and extracted regional resources in exchange for supporting a statewide government (but Montero 2005, for a more critical analysis). Also, the collapse of the Spanish UCD at the national level in the beginning of the eighties was due in part to the disastrous results of the party in the first regional elections, preceding the 1982 national election (Hopkin, 1999: 221-225). Or, to list another example, the input of the East German regions in the governance of the German federal centre is somehow disproportionate. The Bundesrat, the federal second chamber, provides the *East German regional executives* with an important co-decision right in approximately 50 percent of all federal legislation (a percentage that is said to go down as a result of a recent federalism reform package). Through its participation in several regional governments (in coalition with the SPD), the PDS obtained important concessions from the SPD-Green controlled federal government (1998-2005) in tax or health care reform (Zöhlhofer, 2003). More in general, the PDS can bring specific East German concerns to bear when in a position to co-decide on labour, health care, tax or fiscal equalization reforms at the federal policy level. Germany also illustrates that some parties (such as the Greens) may achieve electoral success and governmental representation at the regional level first, thereby paving the way to statewide electoral success and a role in federal government at a later stage.

Next to patterns of vertical interaction between statewide and regional party systems, we may consider the degree to which elections in one region influence elections in another. Again, the support for autonomist parties in Spain has become more widespread during the 1980s and early 1990s. Yet, this was primarily a consequence of the rapid growth of such parties in the non-historic communities (such as the Canary Islands or Aragon) rather than of the further rise of such parties in the historic communities (Catalonia, the Basque Country, Galicia) (Pallarés and Keating, 2003 and 2006). Thus, the emergence of autonomist parties in the historic communities created a 'snowball effect' triggering their breakthrough in other regional elections as well.

[A] Statewide Parties as an element of linkage between the subsystems of the multi-level party system

[B]. Definition and Typology of Statewide Parties

The sub-systems of a multi-level party system (the statewide party system and the party systems within each of the regions of the state) interact with each other, vertically and horizontally. Parties are the most important elements of linkage between the statewide and regional party systems; other linkages may consist of ‘communication flows, resource flows, [congruent or partially congruent] coalitions, electoral laws and so on.’ (Gibson and Suarez-Cao, 2007: 7).

However, not all parties provide an equally strong element of linkage between the statewide and regional systems of the multi-level party system. The linkage potential of a party is dependent on two factors: first, the territorial reach and depth of the party defined as the *territorial pervasiveness* of its electoral support and the *type (statewide and/or regional) of elections* in which it participates and second, the strength of the *organizational linkages* between the statewide and regional party branches.

Focusing on the first element alone, Kris Deschouwer (2006b: 292) suggested classifying parties along two dimensions: the *territorial pervasiveness* of the party (do parties gain political representation at one, several or all the regions of the state), and the *presence* of a party at different levels of the political system (do parties exclusively participate in regional or statewide elections, or do they take part in both)? The linkage potential is highest for parties with a high territorial pervasiveness and a presence at all levels of the political system. This is largely the case for statewide parties. Statewide parties can be distinguished from ‘truncated’ parties, which are parties that only *exist* at one level of government (Thorlakson, forthcoming-a). By comparison, although most autonomist parties take part in statewide and regional elections (thus they are not truncated), their political representation is limited to one or at most a few regions of the state. Table 0.1 provides a summary overview and classifies those parties which will be discussed or mentioned in forthcoming chapters (therefore, it does not provide a summary overview of *all* West European parties).

Table 0.1 about here

A quick look at table 1 reveals that while most parties participate in statewide *and* regional electoral contests, parties display a much broader variety with respect to their territorial pervasiveness. For instance, the largest British, German and Spanish parties compete in statewide and regional elections and are present across most regions of the state. In the UK, Labour, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats do not compete in Northern Ireland (UK and devolved elections), but are present in Scotland, Wales and England. The German Christian-Democrats do not compete in Bavaria (federal and regional elections) but participate in statewide and regional elections across the remaining fifteen regions of the state. In Spain, the PSOE and PP compete across all regions of the state but the Catalan Social Democrats (PSC) and Navarrese Conservatives (UPN) nonetheless have a special status: they operate as autonomous parties in Catalan or Navarrese elections.

Conversely, a majority of the autonomist parties (for instance the Catalan CiU and ERC, the Basque PNV and EA, the Galician BNG, the Scottish SNP or Welsh PC) participate in statewide elections and in one set of regional elections and gain

representation at both levels. Parties such as the Italian *Lega Nord* or *Alleanza Nazionale* or the East German PDS are to be distinguished from the previous set of autonomist parties insofar as they pervade more than just one region, yet have a geographically concentrated support base (Northern or Southern Italy, East Germany). Similarly, Belgian parties participate in federal and regional elections but do not cover the entire territory of the state. Their electoral support is confined to Flanders and Brussels or to Wallonia and Brussels. Therefore, on the basis of territorial pervasiveness and presence *alone*, the ‘Belgian’ parties should be positioned with most of the West European autonomist parties (but see the contributions by Deschouwer and Verleden to this volume for why most parties lack some additional properties that are commonly associated with such autonomist or ethno-regionalist parties). Leaving aside Belgium, the multi-level party systems of Spain, the United Kingdom and Germany are still dominated by parties with a statewide character. This is the case even for most regional party systems. With the exception of Bavaria, the Basque Country and Navarre, statewide parties still capture a majority of votes in regional elections. The representation of autonomist parties is high in Catalonia, the Canary Islands, Scotland or Wales, but lower than that of the statewide parties.

Statewide parties provide a stronger link between the sub-systems of the multi-level party system than autonomist parties or truncated parties, that is, parties which only take part in elections at one level. Yet, not all statewide parties have an equally strong linkage potential. Some statewide parties provide a more integrated organizational structure connecting the various ‘branches’ or levels of the party. Therefore, we need a different set of terms to highlight variations in the *organizational* linkage potential of statewide parties. In theory, all parties which take part in statewide and one, several, most or all regional elections require some form of vertical integration. Even most autonomist parties have distinct ways of organizing as ‘parliamentary parties’ at the statewide and regional levels, but tend to have only one party organizational core (executive, conference) to coordinate statewide and regional party matters. In comparison, statewide parties have distinct organizational branches at the statewide level and in each of the regions in which they contest elections. Therefore, statewide parties should provide the most extensive forms of vertical and horizontal (inter-regional) policy co-ordination.

Thorlakson (forthcoming-a) classified statewide parties on the basis of the extent to which they are vertically integrated and of the degree of autonomy of the regional party branches. Indicators for high levels of vertical integration are shared (as opposed to separate) membership structures, shared (as opposed to separate) finances and the participation of regional branches into the governance bodies (for instance executive, conference) of the statewide party. Indicators for regional party branch autonomy are the extent to which regional branches can operate freely in policy-making, regional leadership and candidate selection (Thorlakson, forthcoming-a: 6). Where appropriate, the freedom to sign regional coalition deals, or the autonomy to write the regional party program (manifestos), may be seen as complementary indicators of autonomy. Furthermore, the level at which membership dues are paid, the freedom of the regional branches to recruit personnel and raise revenue, and the right to organize and supervise sub-regional or local party matters are sometimes listed as additional indicators of autonomy (Deschouwer, 2006b: 294; Laffin, Shaw and Taylor, 2007). Table 0.2

distinguishes between types of multi-level parties on the basis of their levels of vertical integration and the autonomy of the regional party branches.

Table 0.2 about here

Applying vertical integration and autonomy to the party organizational types that are mentioned above, we find that in the parties of the *split type* the regional branches are completely independent from the central party, as a result of which the vertical integration is weak to non-existent. At most, the two levels of party may form alliances (Thorlakson, forthcoming-a: 7). Even in a *confederal* party, the locus of the party remains unequivocally with the regional party branches. The statewide party branch is subordinate to the regional branches and cannot function without their consent. The regional branches have a high degree of autonomy and the extent of vertical integration remains relatively low. Finally, in a *federal* party, the statewide party branch is more than the sum of its parts and each party level can make final decisions on certain matters. A federal party is a statewide party in which the regional branches participate in some decisions of the statewide party branch, yet retain sufficient autonomy to adapt their organizational structures to the territorial specificities of the electorates which they typically address. The higher the autonomy of the regional branches and the stronger their participation in the statewide party, the more decentralized the federal party

Beyond the three party organizational types which Thorlakson suggests, there may be scope for an additional type which nonetheless falls short of a *unitary* party. We could conceive of a *regionalized* party as a statewide party with regional party branches, but in which the statewide party branch retains the final say (at least formally) in all party organizational matters and with the right to substitute regional branches in case of statewide regional disagreement. The statewide party branch may ‘involve’ the regional branches in some of its decision-making bodies but not more so than some of the local branches or some functional associations (for instance, trade unions, young party members or female caucus, and so on). A unitary party would be a party without regional party branches at all. This further distinction between a federal party and a regionalized party may be useful, as it is plausible that statewide parties in a federal system will give a limited form of autonomy to the regional branches while retaining the right to intervene in all party matters, thus falling somewhere in between the federal and the unitary ideal-types. In the remainder of this chapter we focus on the federal and regionalized statewide parties alone.

[B]. Closing the Circle: Party Systems, Party Organization and Party Strategy

We can now see how party systems, party organizations and party strategy interact. Statewide parties, especially the federal, regionalized or unitary variants, provide a potentially very strong link between the various sub-systems of the multi-level party system. Yet, the extent to which they realize this potential depends on their ability to gather electoral support across all the regions of the state in statewide and regional elections. In turn, that ability hinges on their capacity to establish a cohesive party organization which is capable of co-ordinating the activities of the party across the various levels and regions of the state and of safeguarding some level of programmatic or

ideological cohesiveness. However, statewide parties must also find an organizational structure which allows their regional branches sufficient freedom to take into account regional specificities (for instance when filing candidates or devising an electoral programme for regional elections), *without* jeopardizing the overall programmatic unity of the party. Therefore, a statewide party which operates in a loosely integrated multi-level party system, that is a system with substantial variation between the subsystems, is likely to harm its electoral fortunes when it adopts a unitary or at best regionalized party structure. A loosely integrated party system is thus likely to prompt state-wide parties to organize as federal, possibly even confederal parties.

The same observation applies with regard to electoral strategy. In a loosely integrated party system, statewide parties will be able to obtain a strong position in the regional arena (and play their integrating role) only if they successfully accommodate the particularities of the regional electoral arena in which they compete. Still, while a regionally diversified campaign strategy is more likely in a federal party, we should not disregard the possibility that even a unitary party could decide to tailor its message in regional elections to regional sensibilities and to develop distinct regional strategies. Paradoxically, to the extent that the statewide party successfully adapts its organization and strategy to the multi-levelled and loosely integrated nature of the multi-level party system, the overall integration of the system will increase. In other words, the more the statewide parties are successful in the various regions, for instance by beating the autonomist parties, the more the multi-level party system will become integrated.

The task of statewide parties to strike a balance between authorizing their regional branches to organize and strategize freely and safeguarding the organizational and programmatic unity of the party can be expressed by a few powerful metaphors. Carty for instance, developed the notion of a ‘franchise’ party, in which the state-wide party branch provides ‘a product line, sets standards, manages marketing and advertising’ while local regional units (individual franchise) ‘deliver the product to a particular market, invest local resources, build an organization focused on the needs and resources of the local community’ (Carty, 2004: 10; Fabre, 2008: 28). In this volume, Pieter Van Houten introduces a ‘*principal-agent*’ metaphor to express the same relationship between state-wide and regional party branches. Arguably this analogy may be appropriate for federal or regionalized parties in which the statewide party branch is the ‘principal’ who ‘delegates’ autonomy to the regional branches whenever such delegation is deemed to strengthen the party overall. In confederal parties, on the other hand, the roles are reversed and the state-wide party branch operates as the ‘agent’ of the regional branches. For the purposes of this volume, we distinguish between three distinct ways in which a federal or regionalized party can strategize in response to the multi-layered context in which it operates. First, how does the party adapt its *organization* to the multi-layered context in which it operates? Second, does the party convey different *campaign messages* in the statewide and regional election campaigns in which it takes part? Finally, does the party support different policies when in office at the statewide and regional levels, and (where appropriate) does the party authorize the making of incongruent governing coalitions? On each of these questions parties can opt for different degrees of statewide-regional and inter-regional variation

[A] Explaining Variations in the federal party system and the organization and electoral strategies of federal or regionalized parties

The multi-levelled nature of the party system, of the organization of statewide parties, campaign strategies and policy preferences feature as the key dependent variables in the various contributions to this volume. The next logical step is to list hypotheses to explain variations in these variables. The explanatory variables can be broken down into four major clusters. A first cluster links territorial variations in party systems, party organization campaigning and policy to differences in *the type of federalism or decentralization of the state*. A second cluster links party systemic, organizational, campaign or policy features to the *territorial or social heterogeneity of the society* in which parties operate. A third cluster puts forward a series of *electoral variables*, in particular the simultaneity of statewide and/or regional elections, and in the case of non-simultaneity, the timing of regional relative to statewide elections. A fourth and final cluster is more *party specific*: it accounts for variations in organizational decentralization, campaigning and party policy by proposing party ideology, party institutionalization and incumbency as explanatory factors. In the following section, each of these clusters is considered in greater detail. We only present a set of hypotheses but do not predict a higher validity for any set of clusters or variables listed therein. Further chapters will highlight which variables have the strongest explanatory power when applied to one or a small group of relevant cases from Western Europe.

[B] The Territorial Structure of the State

The first hypothesis investigates the correlation between the territorial structure of the state and our dependent variables. We can think of three important ways in which the distribution of competencies within a state matters: (1) competencies may be distributed according to a functional or a jurisdictional design; (2) regional competencies may differ in scope, i.e. correspond with different policies or different levels of expenditure decentralization (3) competencies may be distributed asymmetrically (see Hooghe and Marks, 2001; Watts, 1999 and Swenden, 2006 for comparative typologies).

[C] A functional or jurisdictional federal design

The first variable relates to the difference between a functional (sometimes also called co-operative or integrative) and a jurisdictional (sometimes also called dual) design (Sawer, 1976; Watts, 1999). In a functional design, most legislation takes the form of framework or concurrent legislation, legislative and administrative tasks are typically attributed to different levels of government and the regions are financed primarily on the basis of shared tax revenues. In a jurisdictional design, the two levels of government are disentangled. Each level controls different legislative powers and is responsible for their administration. Both levels also have sufficient tax revenue powers to finance the bulk of their expenditures. Functional and jurisdictional federalism are ideal types, or rather two ends of a continuum. In reality, no federal state provides a pure form of functional or jurisdictional federalism. Nonetheless, states clearly occupy different positions on this continuum. For instance, in Western Europe, Belgium, Scotland (and especially, but

beyond the scope of this volume Switzerland) come closest to the jurisdictional end of the continuum, while Germany and Wales are nearer to the functional end. Spain occupies an intermediary position.

If we hypothesize that the organizational structure of the state may bear some resemblance to the organizational structure of federal parties, then the autonomy of the regional branches should be highest in a jurisdictional design and lowest in a functional or co-operative design of federalism. For the same reason, we would expect the multi-level party system to be less integrated and the strategy of multi-level parties to diverge more in a jurisdictional design. Jurisdictional designs also reduce the pressure on the making of party politically congruent coalitions across levels of government and are conducive to more multi-level variation in party policy. However, since a co-operative design gives rise to a stronger interdependence between both levels, the participation of the regional branches in statewide party affairs (for instance via guaranteed rights of representation in the statewide party executive or conference) should be higher than in a jurisdictional setting.

[C] Variations in the scope of decentralization

By itself, the distinction between jurisdictional and co-operative federalism sheds light on just one aspect of federal design. The portfolio of competencies which regions control can vary substantially from one state to another. Policies such as health, education, or transport are capital intensive whereas monument conservation, vocational training or housing policies are not (or at least much less so). We define the ‘scope’ of federalism by measuring regional public expenditures as a share of all public expenditures: the higher the regional shares, the larger the scope of decentralization. Accurate comparative data on this indicator are not always easy to obtain (yet better than comparative revenue-raising data), and sometimes regional and local expenditures cannot be easily disaggregated (see Rodden, 2004 for some critical observations). Yet, considering available data from the late 1990s, it appears that regional expenditure levels are highest for Belgium (40.8 per cent) and Germany (38 per cent), followed by Spain (32.5 per cent), the UK (25 per cent) and Italy (Swenden, 2006: 112). The reported UK figure also lists local expenditures. Furthermore, an accurate UK reading would require us to separate data for Westminster expenditures benefiting Scotland or Wales from expenditures by the Scottish or Welsh governments. It may be assumed that, due to the legislative autonomy of Scotland in cost-intensive programs such as health policy and education (but not in income replacement schemes), Scottish expenditure levels stand at least on a par with the Belgian or German regional expenditure levels. Welsh expenditures levels may be lower but not by much, since the main difference between Scottish and Welsh devolution refers to the extent of legislative autonomy, not the level of regional expenditure.

Linking the scope of regional competencies to the integration of the federal party system and federal party organizational properties we hypothesize that the larger the scope, the more disintegrated the federal party system, the more autonomous the regional branches and the stronger their capacity to claim a participatory role in statewide party affairs. Higher levels of regional expenditure should increase the autonomy of the regional party branches since regional party elites control a potentially wider array of resources and will be held in higher esteem by the statewide party. For the same reason, a

larger scope should also coincide with more territorially diversified campaign strategies and a stronger territorial variation in party policy.

[C] Constitutional asymmetry

Finally, not all the regions of a state may have similar levels of *institutional or constitutional autonomy*. Among the sample of West European countries in this study, constitutional asymmetry applies to the three historic communities of Spain (the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia) and Navarre, Scotland and Wales. The highest level of constitutional asymmetry is found in the UK (where Scotland has the highest level of autonomy but England lacks any form of regional self-rule), followed by Spain (where after a period of levelling out, asymmetries have increased again since 2006: Agranoff, 1999; Colino, forthcoming)

We hypothesize that in regions with more constitutional autonomy, the party system is likely to be most distinctive from the multi-level party system overall, and regional branches of federal or regionalized parties will have acquired a special status within the party. This should result in higher levels of regional autonomy or special participatory rights in statewide organizational affairs which other regional branches lack. For the same reason, the electoral strategies of statewide parties in electoral campaigns taking place within such regions or the proposed party policies are likely to be more distinctive than in regions without such a special level of constitutional autonomy.

[C] The State and the Multi-Level Party System: from correlation to causality?

In the explanatory model presented above, the state structure is presented as an exogenous variable which affects the character of the multi-level party system, as well as the territorial organization and strategies of statewide parties. Taking a more longitudinal perspective, it is assumed that changes in the party system, party organization or party strategy reflect changes in the state structure. Such a viewpoint is consistent with the analysis by Chhibber and Kollman, who argue that authority migration, that is the shift of competencies from the centre to the regions or vice versa, triggers changes in the party system (and not the other way round). For Chhibber and Kollman, ‘voters are more likely to support national political parties as the national government becomes more important in their lives’ (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004: 222). Put differently, the (de)centralization of competencies normally ‘precedes’ the (de)nationalization of the party system. Both authors identify four changes that have led to a centralisation of the state and drive the nationalization of the party system: war or the threat of war (in particular World Wars I and II), economic depression (and in the wake thereof, centralization of economic and fiscal powers, as was the case with the New Deal in the US for instance), nation building and the development of the welfare state (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004: 227). True, they admit that in Britain for instance, statewide parties responded to the threat of the Welsh and Scottish nationalists by extending the spending autonomy of the Welsh and Scottish office. More generally, they acknowledge that ‘reciprocal causation’ cannot be ruled out, since governments devolve or centralize powers and public officers also function as party holders. By and large however, important structural changes precipitate changes in the nationalization of the party system (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004: 227).

The viewpoints of Chibber and Kollman are not shared by everyone. For instance, for Caramani decentralization or federalism in Western Europe did not lead to but rather *contained* the regionalization of voting behaviour (Caramani, 2004: 292). Corollary, the regionalization of voting behaviour may have preceded decentralization. As an alternative explanation one could argue that the crucial issue is not who triggers change, the state (by migrating authority) or the voters (by precipitating changes in the party system), but rather what are they *both* responding to? Changes in the party system and (de)centralization may both respond to new social cleavages. To the extent that such cleavages acquire a more regional or territorial character, the party system and the structure of the state in which they are embedded may both denationalize.

Some contributions to this volume shed light on the relationship between the state, the party system and the role of political agency. We take the view that authority migration may not be exogenous but can be determined by the dynamics of the multi-level party system. In other words, a development towards the disintegration of the multi-level party system could result in demands for more regional autonomy and the emergence of dual federalism, whereas a more integrated multi-level party system may foster a centralizing federation with the adoption of a rather functional design. In some cases, the origins of the federal structure can be traced back to the transition to democracy (Germany, Spain), but in other cases the dynamics of the party system seem to have played a crucial role (Belgium). In Belgium for instance, the disintegration of the multi-level party system preceded the decentralization of the state structure. Hence, the state structure adapted to the territorial reorganization of the parties and the development of regional variations in the party system (Verleden in this volume)..

[B] The Territorial Heterogeneity of Society

[C] Territorial dimensions of socio-economic and cultural heterogeneity

Constitutional asymmetries do not arise out of the blue. They often reflect different social, economic or especially cultural (linguistic, religious) or historical (a shared common history predating the emergence of the state) realities confined to one or several regions of the state. More in general, even federal or multi-layered states without constitutional asymmetry (for example Germany) display regional variations in economic development or in the extent to which their citizens identify with the state or a region. Such disparities can diminish or increase in time. Likewise the extent to which citizens in a region experience regional as opposed to statewide identities is subject to continuous change and re-interpretation. The distinctiveness of a political community could also be assessed by analyzing the specificities of its civil society and the media (Keating, Loughlin and Deschouwer, 2003; Greer, 2007, Erk 2008). Regional economic disparities can be measured by comparing regional per capita GRP figures. For EU countries these have become widely available through EUROSTAT publications. Regional identity figures have been measured by using a variety of survey questions, the best known of these remains the Linz-Moreno question on regional identity. It asks citizens to position themselves on a five point scale with exclusive identification with the state or region as the two outliers and equal identification with the state and region in the middle (Moreno, 2001). In Western Europe, the levels of identification with the region (either exclusively

or predominantly) are highest for the ‘stateless nations’ of the Basque Country, followed by Catalonia and Scotland. Galicia, Flanders and Wales generally display slightly lower levels of regional identity, but significantly higher than Wallonia or most of the other Spanish regions. Unfortunately, comparable data are missing for the federal states of Austria, Germany and Switzerland (at least as measured within each of the *Länder* or cantons of the state) and also for Italy. One may assume that in Italy and Germany, the more important territorial cleavage respectively sets the Northern regions apart from the South or the East from the West (Gold, 2003; Hough and Koß in this volume).

Linking inter-regional variations in identity and socio-economic development to party systemic and organizational features generates the expectation that a more territorially heterogeneous society coincides with a less integrated multi-level party system (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). In turn, a territorially less integrated multi-level party system affects the organizational, electoral and policy strategies of statewide parties. There are two conditions under which statewide party organizations may be tempted to give their regional branches more autonomy. First, when the support for statewide parties varies substantially across the regions of the state and second, when regional variations in electoral support are caused primarily by variations in the strength of autonomist parties.

The first condition may arise when the party systems in several regions of the state are more skewed towards the left or right than the overall multi-level party system. Parties of the right may feel tempted to advocate more left-wing positions when they are competing in a predominantly left-wing electoral environment and vice versa. In order to enable such strategic electoral choices, one can expect regional party branches to seek maximal autonomy from the statewide party branches in terms of candidate selection, campaigning, or regional policy making.

The same observations apply a fortiori when variations in regional support are due to competition from autonomist parties. Here, statewide parties must not only provide choices with regard to the left-right dimension, but also with respect to how to position themselves on matters dealing with regional autonomy

[C] Variations in the size of regional electorates

Regions can be distinguished from each other on the basis of more than just their socio-economic or cultural distinctiveness alone. All multi-layered states are to some extent asymmetric insofar as their regions are not equally significant in electoral terms. For instance, taken together Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland make up less than 15 percent of the UK population, whereas North Rhine-Westphalia alone is more populous than all of the East German *Länder* combined. It is not difficult to see how differences in demography may be reflected within federal party organizations. For instance, from the viewpoint of the German SPD, North Rhine-Westphalia is not only a traditional electoral stronghold, but it also houses the SPD regional branch with the largest membership base. Therefore, one may assume that the NRW SPD wields more influence (participation) in the statewide party than the other regional branches. On the other hand, the German SPD may be compelled to keep a closer eye on the NRW party branch than on any of the other branches since the outcome of regional elections in NRW will send larger shockwaves through the German multi-level party system than say elections in Bremen (this was exemplified in 2005, when then SPD Chancellor Schröder triggered the dissolution of the

federal parliament after his party lost badly in NRW regional elections). Because of this interdependence, the autonomy of the NRW branch (organizationally and in policy terms) could be smaller than that of the Bremen branch and its electoral campaign may be steered more by the statewide party. For the same reason, it is sometimes said that Scottish regional party branches can get away with more because Scottish voters represent a relatively small share of the electorate and Scottish politics is not frequently reported in the London-based British political press (Van Biezen and Hopkin, 2006). Smallness, however, should also weaken their capacity to participate in statewide party affairs.

[B] Statewide Party Organizations, Simultaneity and Cycles

The way in which statewide party organizations operate internally may be affected by the timing of regional relative to statewide elections. Three scenarios are possible: statewide and all regional elections coincide (a situation which Kris Deschouwer has referred to as 'vertical simultaneity'), all regional elections coincide ('horizontal simultaneity') but are held independently from statewide elections, or each or at least a clear majority of regional elections are held separately (and separately from statewide elections).

Where statewide and regional elections coincide, the process of candidate selection for both sets of elections may coincide or is at the very least co-ordinated between both levels. The same applies to drafting party programs for statewide and regional elections (Deschouwer 2003 and 2006a: 296-7). Consequently, the autonomy of the regional party branches is likely to be lower and the coordinating role of the statewide party is likely to be stronger. When statewide and regional elections do not coincide but all regional elections are held simultaneously, the statewide party is likely to take an exceptionally high interest in the election, given that the regional elections will be perceived as a crucial popularity test for the incumbent central government. Consequently, the statewide party may wish to coordinate regional campaign themes and intervene in processes of regional candidate selection. Finally, the autonomy of the regional branches should be highest where regional elections take place independently from statewide elections and are held independently from each other.

In the event of non-simultaneity, the timing of a regional election relative to that of a statewide election is likely to be of significance. Where statewide and regional elections do not coincide, the propensity of the statewide party to intervene is likely to be larger, the closer the election is held after, but especially before the statewide election. In the latter case, the election will be seen as an important indicator of future statewide electoral performance, in the former case it will be seen as a confirmation of past statewide electoral success or failure (Deschouwer, 2006a: 297). One may add that regional elections can also gain in relevance the stronger they generate direct and immediate policy repercussions at the statewide level. For instance, the best example occurs when a German regional election if lost or won tilts the balance in favour of the incumbent central government or opposition parties in the German second chamber. Whenever a regional election takes on such a character, the German media will give it more attention and the party leaders of the statewide incumbent or opposition parties will

more likely appear during the campaign, seeking to influence the regional party program and to intervene in the process of government formation

Finally, it is sometimes suggested that the choice of electoral system (proportional representation or majoritarian) affects the vertical integration of statewide parties and the autonomy of their regional branches. PR systems tend to centralize powers within the party organization whereas majoritarian systems typically provide a stronger role for local or constituency associations especially in the process of candidate selection. Yet, the effect of the electoral system on the autonomy of the regional branches of multi-level parties must be carefully studied from party to party. For instance, an important aspect of candidate selection in majoritarian systems takes place at the constituency level whereas party executives play a comparatively larger role in drafting lists for PR elections. If the making of lists for statewide or regional elections is coordinated at the *regional* and not the statewide party level, the autonomy of the regional branches remains intact. In fact, such a party would be more decentralized than a statewide party with the ability to amend candidates for central or regional office who were proposed by sub-regional constituency associations.

The choice of electoral system has a more profound effect on the need for building coalition governments after the elections. Since plurality elections are more likely to produce a clear winner, the ‘need’ for statewide parties to interfere in the formation of a regional government is expected to be much lower than if regional elections are held by PR. In addition, a PR system can also be expected to lead to a more fragmented party system and more in particular facilitate the rise of autonomist parties.

[B] Statewide Party Organizations: Party Ideology, Development and Incumbency

[C] *Incumbency*

The autonomy of regional party branches is not fixed. Whether or not the statewide and/or regional branches of a party hold office is likely to have a profound effect on the level of regional party branch autonomy. The following table summarizes the four possible configurations. We discuss the hypothesized repercussions of each configuration for the level of autonomy of regional branches and their participation in the statewide party in turn.

Table 0.3 about here

A party is most vulnerable to central-regional disagreements when its central and regional party branches participate in government (scenario 1). Internal party disagreements could generate genuine policy disagreements and produce deadlock or contradictory public and party policy. Therefore, the statewide party may want to constrain the autonomy of the regional branches while avoiding open conflict by strengthening their participation in statewide party affairs. The statewide party branch is expected to keep a close eye on the campaign themes which the regional party develops. Conversely, the autonomy of regional party branches in campaigning, pre-selecting candidates and where appropriate regional coalition building or developing deviant party policy should be highest when the statewide party and its regional branches occupy the

opposition benches at both levels (scenario 4). However, the regional party branches are likely to participate less in statewide party matters since the consequences which could emerge from a lack of intra-party coordination between levels are less damaging.

We hypothesize that a regional branch which participates in a regional government, but cohabits with a statewide party in opposition should have considerable autonomy (scenario 2). Due to its role in government, the regional party branch has access to informational and material resources which the statewide party branch is lacking. The policy-making expertise of the regional office holders could be of enormous benefit to the statewide party. Therefore, their participation in the statewide party is likely to increase as a result. In contrast, a regional party branch in opposition which cohabits with a statewide party in office (scenario 3) is more constrained to take issue with statewide party policy. Such a stance would clearly undermine the authority of the statewide party where it matters the most: in government. Therefore, the statewide party may seek to limit the level of regional party branch autonomy, without involving these branches to the same extent in statewide party affairs as in scenario 1.

[C] Party Ideology

Not all party ideologies are equally supportive of regionalism. One can at least hypothesize that statewide parties that are more supportive of regionalism or territorial politics are also more likely to organize internally along regional lines. Therefore, the more a party favours territorial autonomy, the stronger its regional party branches and the stronger their involvement in statewide party matters. On the whole, Labour and Conservative parties are expected to be less receptive to regional autonomy than Liberal or Christian-Democratic parties. Mass parties by origin (though in the meantime catchall or even cartel parties), Labour parties are externally created and have continued to use their broad links to trade unions as a means to mobilize electoral support (Krouwel, 2006: 254). Furthermore, Social-Democratic parties are inclined to prioritize 'inter-personal' solidarity rather than territorial autonomy. For instance, several representatives of the German SPD who participated in the Parliamentary Council (1948) to debate a draft West German constitution vehemently opposed federalism (Nielauß, 1998). Or, to list another example, in the UK, several Labour party politicians (including prominent Scottish or Welsh Labour figures, such as the later party leader Neil Kinnock) rejected devolution when it was first proposed in the 1970s.

By comparison, the resistance to territorial autonomy among Conservative parties corresponds with their concern to uphold traditional notions of sovereignty. Among plurinational states, sovereignty is more closely associated with statewide symbols such as the monarchy, the central parliament, the military, a majority language, and where appropriate, the reverence of Empire (in which the majority nation took a lead role). Each of these values is linked more closely with a centralized than a decentralized political regime. On such grounds, and because of that party's historical connection to *Francoism*, we would expect the *Partido Popular* to be the most centralized of the two major Spanish statewide parties. However, in the UK, the structure of the Conservative Party is not necessarily the least decentralized of the statewide parties. Although the Conservatives were united in their opposition to devolution (at least until 1999), until 1965, the Scottish Conservatives – then known as the Scottish Unionist Party – were a quasi independent

party that was only loosely associated with the Conservative Party in England and Wales (Seawright, 2004; Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006). Its Scottish identity was played out handily during the 1950s, when a British Labour government embarked upon nationalization policies which affected Scottish run businesses and council-run services (Seawright, 2004). In the 1955 statewide elections, the party polled 50.1 percent of the Scottish vote. Yet, with Conservatives in power in London and the Empire in decline, the capacity to pull the Scottish vote waned, and by the mid 1960s the party had lost much of its electoral appeal in Scotland.

Christian-Democratic parties should be distinguished from Conservative parties. Although frequently characterized as mass or catch-all parties, Christian-Democrats generally support '*subsidiarity*'. This doctrine, which originates from Catholic thought, supports policy-making at the lowest possible level. Therefore, Christian-Democratic parties could be expected to be more supportive of regional branch autonomy and policy-making than Social-Democratic parties (Schmid, 1990, Dachs, 2003).

Finally, 'Liberal' parties should be more open to internal dissent, discussion and deliberative decision-making. For instance, the British Liberal-Democrats have been a federal party for a long time, both in their internal organization and in their preferred political structure for the UK (a legacy which dates back Gladstone's home rule). The same observation applied to the Austrian Liberals before it drifted off into more populist and even extreme right wing waters (Höbelt, 2002). However, in Germany, the electoral success of the Liberals was primarily built on its status as a kingmaker in federal, less so in regional coalition-building. Furthermore, the party never developed a significant membership base. When it did so in East Germany shortly after unification (partially due to the enormous popularity of foreign minister Genscher there) the internal party organizational and decision-making structures remained quite centralized and elitist. In the view of Hopper, the party's refusal to adjust its organizational structure has contributed to its rapid decline of support in the East and the declining influence of the East German party branches within the Liberal statewide party organization (Hopper, 2001).

[C] Party Development and Institutionalization

The above examples suggest that by itself ideology is not a strong enough predictor of party organizational decentralization or campaigning. There is always a contextual element that needs to be taken into account. For instance, since the PSOE was outlawed during the Franco regime and deprived of executive power at the statewide level until December 1982, regional party branches could be involved more easily in the build up of the post-Franco party structures (Gunther, Montero and Botella, 2004, but Fabre and Mendez-Lago in this volume). For some regional party chiefs this influence outlived the entry of the PSOE in central government (after which the PSOE became a more centralized party). Regional barons used their party influence to extract policy concessions from the statewide government. One could argue that, due to its origins in the Spanish political system, the PSOE was bound to develop a more decentralized organizational structure than its Conservative archrival. Statewide electoral successes accelerated a process of organizational centralization, just as the centralized nature of the German FDP has been attributed in part to its long time role as a kingmaker in statewide

elections (Hopper 2001). Similarly, since the German SPD did not take part in a federal coalition until 1966, the regional party branches (which often participated in regional coalitions) built up an important reservoir of policy expertise that came in handily when Brandt steered the party towards federal electoral victory. Willy Brandt, who once headed the Berlin regional government, recognized the relevance of regional party branches and leaders in presenting the SPD as a credible alternative to the Christian-Democrats at the statewide level (Lösche and Walter 1992: 234-235). The autonomy of the regional branches even increased after Brandt became party president and successfully pushed through internal party and ideological reforms. Simultaneously, the party (and the people at large) looked upon federalism as a more favourable institutional device (Conradt, 2005: 274).

Finally, although path-dependent logics make parties inimical to structural change, parties also operate in an increasingly volatile environment, and unlike other 'public sector institutions' (for instance ministerial departments or agencies) are subject to direct and recurrent electoral accountability. It has been suggested that in order to cope with these new external challenges, most West European parties developed from *mass* into electoralist *catch all parties* and by now obtained the features of a *cartel party* (Krouwel, 2006 for a comprehensive overview, also Katz and Mair 1995 for an exploration of the cartel party and Detterbeck, 2005 for a powerful critique). In cartel parties power typically moves away from the party organization (especially the party activists) to the party office holders. However, a second feature relates to the vertical *stratarchy* of different party levels. According to this thesis each level (statewide or regional) should be free to devise its own political strategies and strategic questions, including candidate selection and policy-making (Katz and Mair, 1995: 21; Detterbeck, 2005: 174-5). However, one could hypothesize that the degree of decentralisation and concomitant strategic divergence will depend on how the party was organised in the past. Arguably, for parties that developed into strong and centralised mass-parties it will be less evident to adapt their organisation and strategy to a decentralised state-structure.

[A] Overview of the Contributions

In the previous sections, we set out an ambitious research agenda with respect to studying multi-level party systems and the organization, strategy or policies of statewide parties which compete in statewide and regional elections. The chapters in this volume do not apply this framework to each of the West European federal party systems or the statewide parties which are vying for votes and office within them. Instead, we present evidence from five important federal or quasi-federal states of Western Europe: Belgium, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom. Our chapters are comparative in a sense that each of them focuses on the electoral performance, strategy or organization of more than just one statewide party. Some chapters purposefully adopt a cross-national approach by combining evidence from Belgium and Spain (Deschouwer), Spain and the UK (Fabre and Mendéz-Lago), Spain and Germany (Van Houten, Stefuriuc). Other chapters present evidence from a single country study, but always do so with a broader theoretical or comparative framework in mind. The order in which the chapters are presented roughly respects the threefold structure of the analytical framework outlined above.

[B] Party System Analyses

A first group of two chapters is concerned with an analysis of multilevel party systems. In the first contribution, Kris Deschouwer addresses Caramani's nationalization thesis by testing whether nationalization can be observed where it is expected the least: Belgium and Spain. Both states have undergone a rather radical regionalization or even federalization process in recent decades and therefore the question arises whether we can observe an effect of the regionalization of their political systems on the outcomes of state-wide elections? Deschouwer develops a set of measurements to establish (1) whether the outcome of statewide elections reflects regional differences and (2) if so, whether the territorial heterogeneity of statewide electoral results has been *increasing* across time. Although the Belgian parties are no longer statewide, their inclusion is warranted, since parties still behave as 'party families': ideologically related parties from both sides of the language border end up together in federal government or opposition, at least until 2007. Furthermore, since the Belgian statewide parties split between 1968 and 1978, but the electoral time series goes back to 1949 we can indeed consider to what extent the split of the parties coincides with or rather is preceded by a regionalization of national electoral results.

Deschouwer's chapter is concerned with developments in the statewide party system in two states which have decentralized in recent decades. In their contribution, Hough and Koß consider whether similar developments can be observed in Germany, a more 'stable' federation in terms of the scope of regional autonomy in recent decades. In contrast with Deschouwer both authors analyze electoral trends in the statewide *and* regional party systems. By doing so, they pay attention to the concern that even if no significant trends in the 'regionalization' of the statewide party system may be observed, voters could nonetheless increasingly display features of 'multi-level' voting behavior, that is approach regional elections without clear reference to statewide party politics. By adopting a multi-level approach, Hough and Koß analyze the effect of German unification on the integration of the German party system. Their analysis compares electoral trends before and after unification and, in the case of the latter, also compares developments between the 'old' and the 'new' German *Länder*.

[B] The Organization of Statewide parties in the context of a multi-level system

A second group of five chapters is concerned with how statewide parties organize in light of having to compete for votes and office in a multi-layered structure. The first three of these chapters provide a general overview on how statewide parties have adapted their organization to the regionalized or federal nature of the state in which they operate.

In a first contribution Detterbeck and Jeffery build upon the preceding analysis by Hough and Koß. They focus on the extent to which German unification sent shockwaves through the German political system and especially prompted a recalibration of German federalism. However, contrary to Hough and Koß, their unit of analysis is the adaptation of the statewide parties, not the German party system. After unification, Germany has become a much more territorially heterogeneous society. They analyze the extent to which the German statewide parties have organized differently as a result.

In the next contribution, Jonathan Hopkin provides one of the first – if not the first – account of the territorial organization of Italian statewide parties. His analysis provides meaningful insights on the assumed relationship between the gradual decentralization of the state and adjustments in the internal organization of statewide parties. Like the chapter on the German parties (in which unification features as a ‘critical juncture’) Hopkin distinguishes between two radically different periods. However, the critical juncture is related less to specific changes in the territorial organization of the state, than in the implosion of the old party system and the change of electoral system in 1993. Therefore the effect of regionalization on the party system is considered separately for the First and Second Republic.

In a third contribution, Fabre and Méndez-Lago focus on the territorial organization of the leading UK and Spanish statewide parties. The degree of autonomy of the regional party branches (‘self-rule’) is compared with their levels of participation (‘shared rule’ or ‘vertical integration’) in the statewide party branch. Their evidence is presented in light of some hypotheses that were outlined above: what is the effect of constitutional asymmetry, of incumbency at the statewide and regional levels and of party ideological traditions on how these statewide parties organize internally?

The fourth chapter in this group revisits the UK case, but focuses on one important aspect: candidate selection. Candidate selection, Gallagher and Marsh once famously said, is the ‘secret garden’ of politics (Gallagher and Marsh, 1988). That garden has become less secret in recent years, as more publications have become available which analyze how parties select candidates for statewide elections (Rahat and Hazan, 2001; Bille, 2001). In his contribution, Jonathan Bradbury sheds light on how the British statewide parties adapted their candidate selection procedures since they have had to organize for UK devolved elections. By doing so his analysis ‘corrects’ the statewide bias which thus far prevailed in most research on candidate selection. He also considers the link between constitutional asymmetry (Scotland versus Wales) and party ideology on selecting candidates for regional elections. Bradbury challenges the hypotheses that the cartelization of parties coincides with a more strataarchical relationship. Relying on more recent writings of Katz (2001), he argues that in parties which adopt a more cartelized profile, central party elites do not refrain from pushing through candidate selection reforms for electoral reasons

In the final contribution to this section, Frederik Verleden analyzes the conditions under which the Belgian statewide parties split along linguistic lines between 1968 and 1978. The break up of statewide parties in a unitary political system raises an important puzzle for analysts who posit a causal link between authority migration and party system (de)nationalization. The contribution by Verleden suggests that to answer this puzzle we must consider ‘authority migration’ *within* party organizational structures and not just within the state as a whole. More specifically, to what extent were the Belgian statewide parties already organized as ‘federal’ or ‘confederal’ parties before they broke up and what triggered their break up?

[B] Campaign Strategy and Policy

The final section brings together four chapters which focus more broadly on the relationship between the statewide party and its regional branches in a context of having

to fight elections (campaign strategy) and to make policy at different levels and distinctive territorial political contexts.

The first contribution, by Pieter Van Houten applies a ‘principal-agent’ framework to demonstrate the intricate relationship between the statewide and regional party branches on policy issues that touch the core of regional autonomy. He first considers to what extent the German state-wide parties sought influencing the viewpoints of the party controlled Länder-governments when these were asked to formulate their position on some proposals affecting their own financing. He then turns to the very sensitive negotiations between the Spanish Social-Democrats and their semi-autonomous regional party branch on revising the Catalan Statute of Autonomy in 2005-2006. By focusing on three policy issues of intra party contention, Van Houten investigates the conditions under which the state-wide party principal can or cannot assert ‘his’ autonomy vis-à-vis the regional agents.

The next chapter in this cluster stays with the German and Spanish case studies, yet focuses on a different dimension of regional party branch autonomy: regional coalition building. Spanish and German regional elections are held by proportional representation (albeit skewed in a majoritarian direction in the former), and as a result frequently necessitate the building of regional coalitional governments. However, can regional party branches build the coalitions of their choice, or are they constrained in this respect by the desires of the statewide party? The relatively high level of interlocking between the state-wide and regional policy levels in both polities provides statewide party branches with an incentive to prefer the ‘politically most reliable’ (read party politically congruent) coalitions at the regional level also. Yet, regional party branches may opt for incongruent coalitions because the outcome of regional elections leaves them with no choice or because they prefer such coalitions for electoral or policy reasons. Relying on interviews with key policy makers in two Spanish and two German regions Ștefuriuc considers why and under which conditions regional party branches are more likely to opt for making regional coalitions that are incongruent to statewide coalitions.

The final two chapters in the section focus specifically on the electoral strategy of statewide parties in regional elections of multinational states. Campaign strategies are analyzed by studying the content of party manifestos for statewide and regional elections. To this purpose, both chapters analyze regional party manifestos, built upon the well known methodology of the Comparative Manifesto Project. Rather than copying the CMP issue categorization, Bart Maddens and his team redefined issue categories in a way which makes them more amenable to the comparative analysis of *regional* party manifestoes. For each statewide party, issue profiles are drawn up which map the *salience* (that is the frequency) with which certain issue categories (for instance social security, foreign policy and so on) are listed in their manifestos for statewide and regional elections. In addition, each issue is screened on its *position* (direction) on the regionalist issue, i.e. on the view that parties take with regard to the current levels of regional autonomy (institutional dimension) and to the strengthening of a regional (cultural or linguistic) identity. Combining salience and position generates a measure of *directional intensity*. In the first of two contributions, Maddens and Libbrecht analyze the strategy of the Spanish statewide parties with regard to the regionalist issue, i.e. the extent to which statewide parties either support more regional autonomy or regional culture and identity

in regional and statewide elections. In a second contribution, Fabre and Martínez consider the strategy of UK statewide parties with respect to their salience profiles overall (that is on all issues in a party manifesto) and with respect to the directional intensity on the regionalist issue.

The conclusion to this volume by the editors seeks to tie the various approaches together and where possible to address (some of) the hypotheses that were outlined above. It also identifies unresolved puzzles or additional questions on party (system) research that were raised by the findings presented in the various contributions to the volume.

Tables

Table 0.1 Classification of West European Parties on the basis of territorial pervasiveness and participation in elections

		Participation in Elections		
		Regional elections only	Statewide elections only	Regional and statewide elections
Territorial Pervasiveness	One Region	Partei Rechtsstaatlicher Offensive (Hamburg) PRC (Partido Regionalista de Cantabria), PRi (Partido Riojano)		CSU, SNP, PC, BNG, CiU, ERC, PNV, EA
	Some Regions			PDS, Belgian parties
	Most Regions			CDU, Conservatives, Labour, Liberal- Democrats, PP, PSOE
	All Regions			SPD, FDP, Die Linke, IU

Source: own elaboration from Deschouwer 2006b: 292. The classification of the PRi and PRC is based on their participation in the most recent set of regional and statewide elections alone. The PRi participated in statewide elections, but not after 2000; the PRC did not participate in statewide elections after 1993. Also, the EA and PNV have participated in regional elections in Navarre (albeit under a different name). The PDS filed candidates across all regions in statewide elections, but failed to gain representation in the Western Länder

Table 0.2 Typology of statewide parties based on levels of vertical integration and autonomy of the regional branches

Typology of statewide parties					
	Split	Confederal	Federal	Regionalized	Unitary
Vertical Integration	Very Low to non-existent	Medium, regional branches retain veto	High	Medium	Not Applicable
Regional Autonomy	High	High	Medium or Low, depending on type of federal structure	Low (statewide party in a position of hierarchical control)	None

Table 0.3 Combination Matrix Government and Opposition

REGIONAL PARTY BRANCH	STATE WIDE PARTY BRANCH		
	GOVERNMENT		OPPOSITION
	GOVERNMENT	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
	OPPOSITION	Scenario 3	Scenario 4